

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Institute of Standards and Technology
Plan for Balanced Membership of the
Manufacturing Extension Partnership Advisory Board

(1) Name. Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) Advisory Board (Advisory Board or Board)

(2) Authorization. Section 3003(d) of the America COMPETES Act (P.L. 110-69); 15 U.S.C. 278k(e), as amended.

(3) Mission and Function: The Board provides the Hollings MEP advice and assessments on programs, plans, and policies focused on supporting and growing the U.S. manufacturing industry. Specifically, the Board is charged with:

- Providing advice on MEP programs, plans and policies
- Assessing the soundness of MEP plans and strategies
- Assessing current performance against MEP programs plans
- Functioning solely in an advisory capacity, in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as amended, 5 U.S.C. App.

The Board shall transmit an annual report through the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) to the Secretary of the Department of Commerce for transmittal to Congress within 30 days after the submission to Congress of the President's annual budget request each year. The report will address the status of the MEP and comment on the relevant sections of the programmatic planning document and updates thereto transmitted to Congress by the Director under 15 U.S.C. 278i(c) and (d).

(4) Points of View. As outlined in section 3003(d) of the America COMPETES Act (P.L. 110-69); 15 U.S.C. 278k(e), as amended, the Board shall consist of 10 members broadly representative of stakeholders, to be appointed by the Director. At least 2 members shall be employed by or on an advisory board for the MEP centers, and at least 5 other members shall be from United States small businesses in the manufacturing sector. No member shall be an employee of the Federal Government.

To ensure adequate consideration of the many relevant stakeholder perspectives, the Director of NIST will seek to appoint Board members with a diverse set of backgrounds and experiences that represent the manufacturing industry, partner organizations, and academia. NIST MEP strives to identify Board candidates that can provide valuable insight and feedback regarding the needs of the manufacturing industry and the tools and services that will position U. S. manufacturers to compete in the global economy.

(5) Other Balance Factors. Members are drawn from industry and organizations having an interest in industrial service programs, such as, but not limited to, manufacturing organizations, partner organizations, state and local government, non-profit associations, and academia. With MEP centers located across the country and in Puerto Rico, geographic location is also taken into consideration.

(6) Candidate Identification Process. NIST MEP uses a nomination process to identify candidates for the MEP Advisory Board. NIST MEP will solicit nominations for Board membership through an annual Federal Register notice, posting on the Board website, outreach to the 60 MEP Centers located across the U.S., and discussions with various partners, industry associations, and state and local organizations. Candidates may be nominated by their peers or may self-nominate. A list of highly qualified candidates is developed based upon a review of the candidates' qualifications by the Director of the NIST MEP. Qualifications considered include: education, professional experience, and background in the area of manufacturing or manufacturing policy. From the list of highly qualified candidates, the Director of the NIST MEP selects one or more candidates for further consideration to fill vacancies on the committee. These candidates are contacted to ascertain their willingness and ability to serve if selected. From this, the Director of the NIST MEP recommends the list of nominees to the Director of NIST who makes the final decision for appointment. Should a vacancy arise, NIST MEP will follow the process listed above, seeking to fill the vacancy in the most timely manner.

MEP Advisory Board members serve three year terms and may serve two consecutive terms. A member that has served two consecutive terms is ineligible to serve a third term for a period of one year following the expiration of the second term.

(7) Subcommittee Balance. NIST may establish subcommittees subject to the provisions of the FACA, the FACA implementing regulations, and applicable Department of Commerce guidance. Subcommittee members are to be selected from amongst the members of the Board. Subcommittees must report back to the Board, and will not provide advice or work products directly to NIST.

(1) Other. N/A

(2) Date Prepared/Updated. August 25, 2015